ONTARIO PARKS

Algoma Headwaters

Terms of Reference

Signature Site Strategy

Provincial Parks
- Algoma Headwaters
- Goulais River
- Aubinadong/Nushatogaini Rivers

Conservation Reserve
- Ranger North

Ontario
Ontario's Living Legacy

July 2002

Approval Statement

We are pleased to approve these Terms of Reference for the development of the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site Strategy.

The Strategy will encompass the following protected areas:

- Algoma Headwaters Provincial Park
- Goulais River Provincial Park
- Aubinadong - Nushatogaini Provincial Park and
- Ranger North Conservation Reserve

These Terms of Reference identify the tasks to be accomplished, the roles and responsibilities of the project manager and the planning team, as well as the planning schedule for the Signature Site Strategy. The planning process will follow the requirements for provincial parks and conservation reserves to create management plans for the above protected areas.

Managing Director
Ontario Parks

Northeast Regional Director
Ministry of Natural Resources

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1.0 Introduction

The Algoma Headwaters Signature Site (approx. 59,626 ha.) is one of nine 'featured areas' identified in the *Ontario's Living Legacy - Land Use Strategy* (July 1999) as having significant resource, tourism and recreational potential that merits an increased level of planning, management and promotion. Included in this Signature Site are one Natural Environment Class Provincial Park known as Algoma Headwaters, two Waterway Class Provincial Parks (the Goulais, and Aubinadong-Nushatogaini Rivers), as well as the Ranger North Conservation Reserve (Figure 1).

A Signature Site Strategy will be prepared for the Algoma Headwaters. This Strategy will guide the protection and management of resources, visitor use and overall development within the parks and the conservation reserve, as well address potential impacts relating to adjoining Crown lands. Within this Strategy, the requirements for both Conservation Reserve and park management planning will be met. The strategy is a dynamic tool, looking forward for a 20-year period.

When approved, the Signature Site Strategy will set the direction for plan implementation, including protection, zoning, management, and operation within the Signature Site. The Strategy will serve as a working guide for Ontario Parks and MNR staff upon which to base sound management actions. While this strategy will set the overall direction for management, specific actions needed to implement the plan will be provided in subsequent directives known as Implementation Plans. These plans will provide further detailed guidance for the operation, management and protection of the Signature Sites' resources.

The newly protected areas of the Signature Site are designated in *Ontario's Living Legacy - Land Use Strategy* (1999). These special areas share a common theme in that they all provide remote backcountry experiences. Planning will recognize the existing commercial tourism licences within the Signature Site.

There are no public services at present within the Signature Site. This means that the Site has limited facilities or services, with no staffing or operations budget. The intent of the Strategy is to protect significant Signature Site resources, manage visitor use and ensure that operations are sustainable in an environmental, social, and economically acceptable manner.

2.0 Rationale for Signature Site Planning

The majority of the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site is comprised of lands and waters to be regulated as provincial parks. The Signature Site also includes a conservation reserve. These protected areas are physically connected, share related resources and values, experience similar patterns of use and will be managed together. Planning will be undertaken for all the protected areas at the same time. One document, the "Algoma Headwaters Signature Site Strategy", will be developed and will be approved as the management plan for the protected areas.

Planning discussions will recognize Aboriginal values and treaty rights.

The Signature Site Strategy will provide the following:

- A definition of the role of each protected area within the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site;
- The designation of zones for the protection, planning, management, operations and development of the Site's natural, cultural and recreational resources;
- Direction in the planning, management and development of the Signature Site to provide assurance that the environment will be protected and also that the Signature Site Strategy will be responsive to public interests:
- Guidance for the preparation of subsequent implementation and resource management plans required to implement protected area policies and to achieve program objectives;
- A rationale and priorities for the funding of capital development and operations;
- A record of public consultation and input into the planning process;
- A basis for the ongoing monitoring of the development and management of the Signature Site.

Figure 1: Algoma Headwaters Signature Site – Land Use Designations

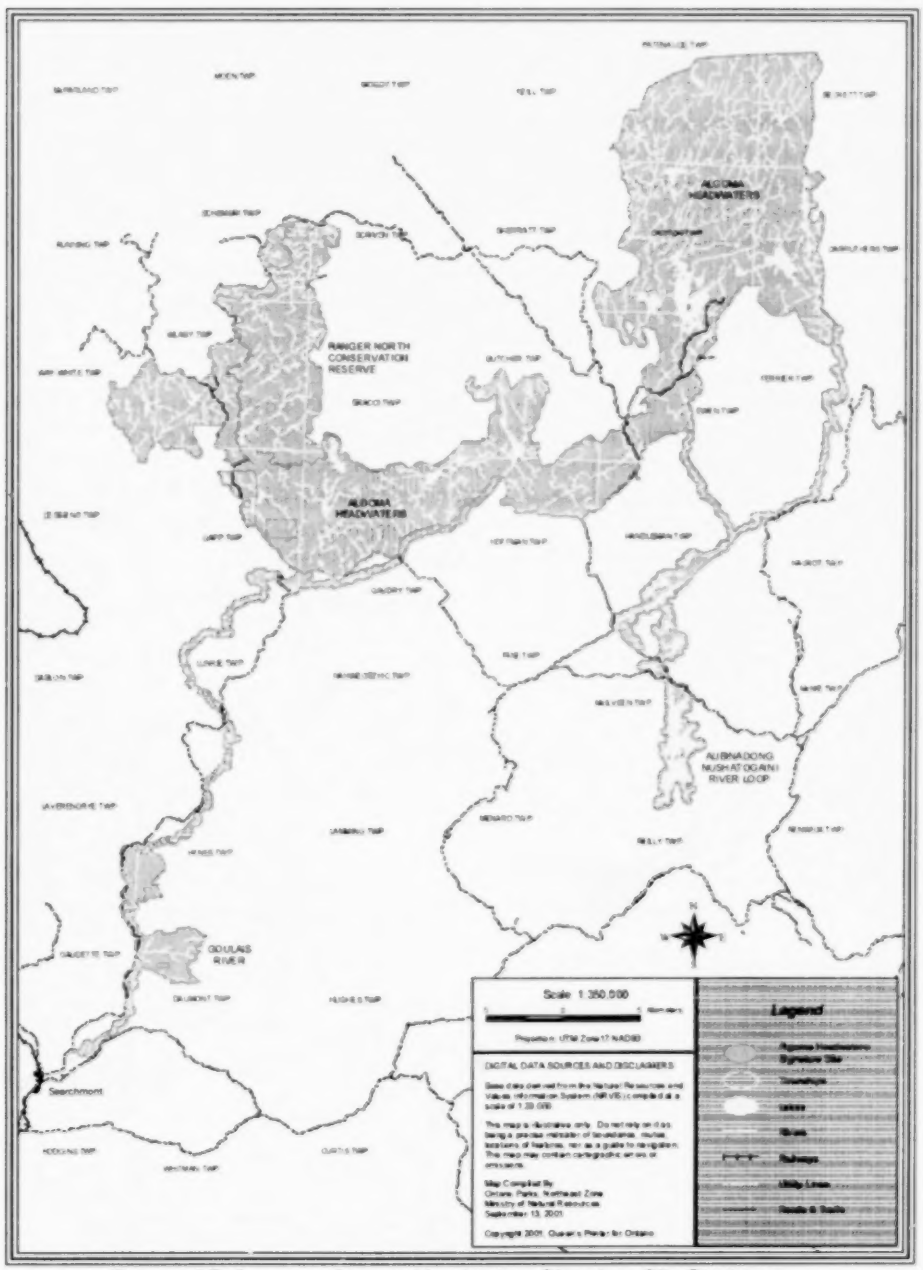
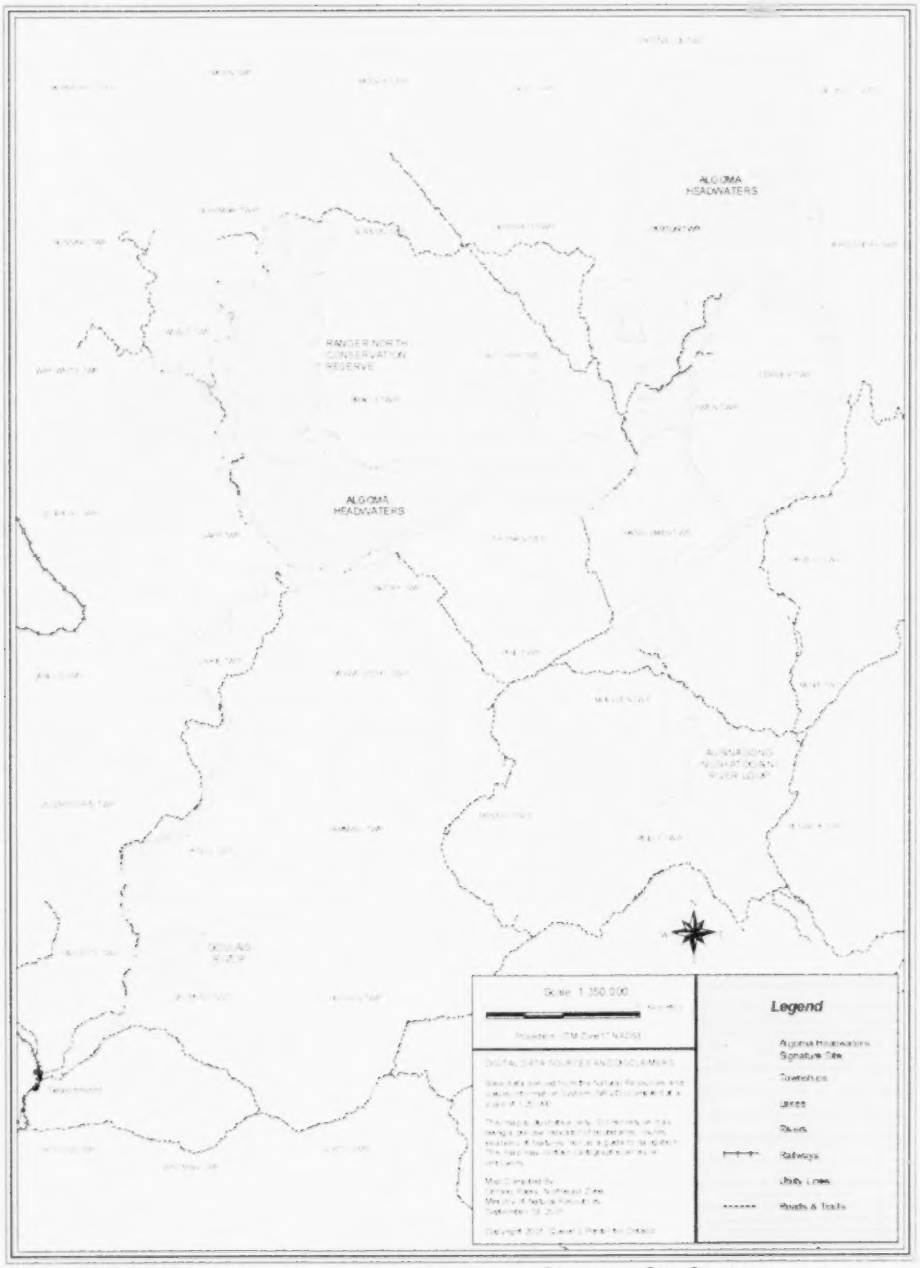


Figure 1: Algoma Headwaters Signature Site – Land Use Designations



The Signature Site Strategy will include, but not be limited to:

- An overall vision, goal and objectives;
- Zoning;

Policies for resource stewardship, operations and development for:

- Natural resources (e.g. lands and waters, vegetation, wildlife and fisheries);
- Cultural resources (e.g. First Nation values, historical sites);
- Operations (e.g. recreation management, natural heritage education, tourism services, marketing and research);
- Development (e.g. roads, access points, trails, parking, other infrastructure);
- Implementation priorities for stewardship, operations and development;
- Social and economic impact analysis;
- Summaries of all public consultation

The authority and direction for the Signature Site planning process is based upon legislation and policies that govern Ontario Parks and Crown land within the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources:

- Ontario's Living Legacy / Land Use Strategy (OMNR, 1999)
- Conservation Reserves Policy (PL 3.03.05) (OMNR 1997)
- Natures Best - Ontario's Parks and Protected Areas: The Framework and Action Plan (OMNR, 1997)
- Ontario's Approach to Wilderness: A Policy (OMNR, 1997)
- Environmental Bill of Rights (R.S.O. 1993, Chapter 28)
- Declaration Orders MNR-59/2, MNR 61, and MNR 65;
- A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves (in preparation – 2001)
- Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual Policies, 1992 Update (OMNR, 1992)
- Provincial Parks Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.34)
- Environmental Assessment Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter E.18)
- Provincial Parks Policy PM 1.00 – Implementation Details (OMNR, 1989)
- Megisan Lake Area Environmental Assessment on Crown Timber "DRAFT" (OMNR, 1995)
- Sault Ste. Marie District Land Use Guidelines (OMNR, 1983)
- Chapleau District Land Use Guidelines (OMNR, 1983)
- Blind River District Land Use Guidelines (OMNR, 1983)

3.0 Planning History

The Algoma Headwaters Signature Site lies within the Ministry of Natural Resources' Sault Ste. Marie and Chapleau Districts. To the north and east, the boundary of Algoma Headwaters Park is shared with Chapleau District. On the east, the boundaries of the Algoma Headwaters Park and Aubinadong / Nushatogaini Rivers Park are within the jurisdiction of the Sault Ste. Marie District within the Blind River Area. (It should be noted that Blind River was an MNR district until the Ministry reorganized in 1996, when it became the Blind River Area within the enlarged Sault Ste. Marie District).

Planning and management of these protected areas has traditionally been guided by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Sault Ste. Marie "District Land Use Guidelines" (OMNR, 1983) and the Chapleau "District Land Use Guidelines" (OMNR 1983) and the Ranger North Conservation Reserve Statement of Conservation Interest (OMNR 1999). During the extensive land use planning exercise from February 1997 until May 1999, strategic direction for newly protected areas was identified within the *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR 1999).

In 1989, a vast portion of Crown land became the focus of the Megisan Lake Area Environmental Assessment of Crown Timber. The process was initiated by tourist outfitters in order to examine the effects of forest management activities on remote tourism operations. A citizens' advisory committee, working with the support of a team of multi-ministry staff, produced the first individual environmental assessment of Crown timber for the Province of Ontario. The resulting report, 'Draft' Environmental Assessment of Crown Timber for the Megisan Lake Area (OMNR, 1995) provided the basis for the land use negotiations for Crown lands and waters for the Algoma Headwaters area, as outlined in the "Lands for Life Round Table" direction (OMNR, 1997).

Until the Signature Site Strategy is completed, an Interim Management Statement (IMS) will provide general management. The IMS is based on policies in *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*, provincial parks planning and management policies and the Ranger North Conservation Reserve Statement of Conservation Interest (OMNR 1999). Major decisions, particularly those that may be considered long term, will be left to the Signature Site planning process.

The Signature Site Strategy will incorporate all information gathered throughout the planning process. This will include applicable information as outlined in the Megisan Lake Area EA (OMNR, 1995). The management planning process will identify significant attributes, such as natural and cultural heritage representation and recreation values, which are consistent with the Ministry's objectives for natural heritage and provincial parks. It will explore linkages between the interconnecting natural environment, and waterway parks and the conservation reserve. Management of adjacent Crown land and other designations (e.g. Forest Reserves) will consider ecological features, access and travel patterns,

landscape level influences, and other existing designations as they relate to the Signature Site.

This Strategy will provide overall direction for the protection, management and integration of operations for the promotion and development of the provincial parks and conservation reserve in the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site (refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Protected Areas within the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site

Protected Area	Classification	Area (ha)	Year Regulated	Planning to Date
Algoma Headwaters	Natural Environment	42,745	N/A	IMS
Goulais River	Waterway	5,084	N/A	IMS
Aubinadong-Nushatogaini Rivers	Waterway	4,928	N/A	IMS
Ranger North	Conservation Reserve	6,869	1997	Statement of Conservation Interest
TOTAL		59,626		

4.0 Planning Area

Ontario's rich natural diversity is divided into 14 Eco-regions, which represent areas of similar forest type and landforms. The regions are further subdivided into 67 Site Eco-districts, each based upon characteristic patterns of physiographic features. The Signature Site straddles the boundary between Site Districts 5E-13 and 4E-3. These protected areas lie within the transition zone where the Boreal and Great Lakes-St. Lawrence forest regions overlap. Vegetation site types range from cliffs and rock barrens to upland coniferous, mixed and deciduous forests to bogs, fens and aquatic communities. The site is well known for the presence of stands of old growth red and white pine. The area contains a variety of wetlands, including black spruce bogs and aquatic fens.

- Landforms in this area are typical of the southern Canadian Shield. The majority of the Signature Site is comprised of glacial moraine and glacio-fluvial deposits laid down from the receding glaciers 10,000 years ago. Bedrock in the area includes the westward extension of the Abitibi Greenbelt that enters into the north central portion of Gapp Township centered around Hanes Lake. This 'Greenbelt' contains Archean metavolcanics well in excess of 2 billion years old. Also, a very small remnant of the Batchawana Greenstone Belt exists as a migmatitic zone in Gaudry Township. The area has a rugged topography, including rolling hills, rocky barren knobs, cliffs, and associated talus slopes.

- Wildlife is plentiful in the Signature Site, with 43 species of mammals, 197 species of birds and 28 species of reptiles and amphibians recorded. The area contains a number of species which are listed as 'vulnerable, threatened and endangered' on the Natural Heritage Information Centers' (NHIC) list of "Species at Risk".

- Many small and medium-sized deep lakes and fast-flowing coldwater streams create ideal conditions for lake trout and brook trout populations. There are also warm water aquatic systems sustaining northern pike and walleye populations throughout the northeast portion of the Signature Site.

- The Algoma Headwaters Signature Site is also rich in pre-contact and post-contact cultural history. Numerous heritage sites are found within the Signature Site and the surrounding Crown lands. During the Draft Megisan Lake EA process, two documents were produced: "Ethnohistory and Aboriginal Peoples Land Use" and "Potential Cultural Heritage Areas" (OMNR 1993). This document identifies 146 cultural heritage sites within that portion of the Signature Site that was covered by the Megisan EA. Of the 146 sites identified, 68 are of high potential and 78 are of medium potential for containing cultural heritage features. These sites could include heritage resource features: isolated artifacts, small and large campsites, burials, pictographs, rock features (cairns), cache sites, vision pit (religious) sites, lithic collection sites, ancient trails or portages, historic tent / cabin sites, logging camps and roads, early recreation sites and cultural landscapes.

4.1 Algoma Headwaters Provincial Park

A Natural Environment Class Park, the Algoma Headwaters was first recognized as having significant natural and cultural environments with a high potential for recreation and tourism during the Megisan Lake Environmental Assessment (E.A.). This E.A. process took place between 1989 and 1995, with the *'Area of the Undertaking'* delineated to include two blocks encompassing the areas around Megisan Lake and Goulais Lake respectively. The Algoma Headwaters Provincial Park captures and protects approximately 40% of this Megisan E.A., and has been designated a Natural Environment class park (*Ontario's Living Legacy – Land Use Strategy* (July 1999).

The area's remoteness and potential for backcountry travel, as well as the old growth red and white pine are two of its most significant values. More is being learned about significant geological, biological and cultural features within the site.

Algoma Headwaters has over 150 kilometers of interconnecting canoe routes that link some of its many lakes and rivers. Generally, canoeing opportunities consist of flatwater, however, in high water levels of spring, many rapids on the Goulais River may be ranked as Class I and Class II whitewater. Canoe routes

connect to the Aubinadong River / Nushatogaini Rivers and Goulais River Provincial Parks and other waterways on Crown land.

There are several forest access roads in the vicinity of the Algoma Headwaters Provincial Park. The park is bisected by Point Lake Road, and encircled by the Ranger North and the Domtar Roads. These roads provide access for anglers, hunters, canoeists, and for snowmobile and ATV travel within the park.

There are tertiary logging roads that are closed to vehicular traffic, including the Eileen-Coppens Rd., Dead Lake Rd., and Torrance Lake Rd.. Patterson Lake, Goulais Lake and the northeast portion of the park north and the northeast portion of Fyfe Lake, is accessed primarily by remote tourist fly-in operators.

4.2 Goulais River Provincial Park

This Waterway Park flows southwest into Lake Superior. It originates from Eel Lake, north of the Signature Site in Carton Township through the central portion of Algoma Headwaters Provincial Park. There is a 200 metre setback around all boundary water bodies. The Goulais River weaves approximately 67 kilometres in roughly a north-south direction, originating in site district 4E-3 and passing through the Searchmont area in Site District 5E-13.

The park includes the Goulais River-Laverendrye Township, and the Goulais, Brule and Searchmont Delta natural heritage areas. Dominant landform types are sloping glacial outwash landforms supporting forests of balsam fir, white birch, black and white spruce and sugar maple. The other dominant landform type is that of steep, rugged hills with forests of white birch, poplar, sugar maple and white spruce. A prehistoric delta which was created at the outlet of a massive channel of glacial melt water, can also be found within the park. The river passes through shoreline wetlands and supports a self-sustaining brook trout population. It is shallow in places, and includes falls, a lake section and stretches through scenic talus slopes and bedrock resembling rock gardens. The park area also contains an outpost camp and snowmobile trails.

Portions of a primary forest access road (Whitman Dam) are within the Goulais River Provincial Park. There are three permanent water crossings within the park: Saddle Lake, Mile 23 and the Tepee crossing. This road will be utilized and maintained by the forest industry, and will continue to provide access to recreational users.

4.3 Aubinadong-Nushatogaini Rivers Provincial Park

This Waterway Class Park forms an 85 kilometer loop composed of a network of lakes and rivers that connect with the Algoma Headwaters, and flow into Saymo Lake and Ranger Lake to the south. There is a 200 metre setback around all boundary water bodies. The Aubinadong West River flows south from Torrance

Lake and connects with the Nushatogaini River and then continues south into Gong Lake. From there, it continues through a series of inter-connecting small lakes eventually flowing into Saymo Lake at the south end of the park. The Ranger North Road provides access points at Gong Lake, Island Lake, Friendly Lake and Saymo Lake. Forest access roads and river crossings receive moderate use by ATV's and snowmobiles. The park's varied, rugged and remote landscape contains 85 kilometres of canoe routes.

4.4 Ranger North Conservation Reserve

The Ranger North Conservation Reserve is located along the west side of site region 4E-3, with the west boundary forming the boundary between site region 5E-13 and 4E-3. The reserve is approximately 6,898 ha. in size and is located within Gapp, Gaudry, Wlasy, Bracci, Schembri and Scriven Townships.

The reserve contains three old-growth white and red pine areas, identified by the "Reconnaissance Inventory to Locate Old White and/or Red Pine Stands in Site Region 4E of the OMNR" (1990). It includes the Quinn Lake, Bliss Lake and the eastern half of the Galloway Lake old-growth red and white pine stands. This represents the largest old-growth red and white pine forests in northeastern Ontario, and is also believed to be one of the oldest pine forest complexes in Ontario, with some pines estimated to be older than 350 years old. The Ranger North Conservation Reserve will be managed within the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site to ensure consistent management across the entire Signature Site.

Roads in the vicinity of the Ranger North Conservation Reserve include the Ranger North Road, which forms the west boundary of the conservation Reserve, and the Point Lake Road, which touches the south-east corner of the Conservation Reserve. Mechanized travel, including snowmobiles and all terrain vehicles, and non-mechanized travel, such as cycling and horseback riding, is permitted only on existing bush roads. The remoteness of this reserve, as well as the limited accessibility to areas within the reserve, is to be protected.

5.0 Goals and Objectives

Two types of protected areas form the Signature Site: provincial parks and conservation reserves.

5.1 Provincial Parks

The goal of the Provincial Park System is:

To provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and to protect provincially significant natural, cultural and recreational environments in a system of Provincial Parks.

Ontario's system of Provincial Parks is comprised of six park classes, each with its own distinct contribution to overall system objectives. The six classes are: wilderness, nature reserve, historical, natural environment, waterway and recreation.

Individual provincial parks, collectively, achieve the goal of the Provincial Park System. The park system, rather than individual parks, provides a diversity of landscapes and experiences for the benefit of Ontario residents and tourists. Objectives state in broad terms what is proposed to be achieved through planning; this, in turn, will guide park management with the implementation of approved management plans. The following objectives are described in Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies, 1992 Update (OMNR, 1992).

- Protection: To protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario
- Heritage appreciation: To provide opportunities for explorations and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario
- Recreation: To provide outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high intensity day-use to low intensity wilderness experiences.
- Tourism: To provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the province.

More recently, the parks program has placed greater emphasis on its business operations which can be reflected in Signature Site planning. As of 1996, Ontario Parks has focused upon greater fiscal accountability and entrepreneurial spirit. The Ontario Parks Business Plan (OMNR, 1997) provides the following mandate:

- To protect, plan, develop and manage Ontario's system of provincial parks on an ecologically sustainable basis while improving financial self-reliance

The Ontario Parks Business Plan (OMNR, 1997) also provides guidance in the form of Operating Principles. These are as follows:

- Natural and Cultural Heritage Protection: Ontario Parks will continue to ensure that all decisions take into account the need to protect the Province's natural and cultural heritage using the principle of ecological sustainability.

- Customer Service: Ontario Parks will respond to the expectations of customers in the delivery and development of its services, programs and facilities.

- Financial Self-sufficiency: Ontario parks will continue to move towards financial self-sufficiency through a phased reduction in its net financial subsidy, along with implementation of measures to optimize use and increase revenues.

- Accountability: Ontario Parks will continue to set clear, measurable, performance targets for customer service and expenditures/revenues. It will remain accountable for all program functions and its fiscal performance. Progress towards meeting results will be constantly monitored. Actions will be taken to correct failure to meet targets. Conversely, achievements will be recognized in a variety of ways.

- Entrepreneurial Environment: Ontario parks will provide a positive business environment for staff, private sector partners and not-for-profit partners.

5.2 Conservation Reserve

The Ranger North Conservation Reserve is an integral part of the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site. The goal of conservation reserves is:

To protect examples of Ontario's biological and geological features and natural diversity.

Conservation Reserves complement provincial parks in protecting representative natural areas and special landscapes, and are usually remote and undeveloped areas.

The following objectives and strategies are identified in Conservation Reserve Policy (3.03.05):

- To identify Conservation Reserves through a science process
- To ensure that potential Conservation Reserves are withdrawn from staking
- To confirm Conservation reserves through a Ministry land use planning process
- To afford Conservation Reserves legal protection
- To manage Conservation Reserves to protect the integrity of their natural values

The Ranger North Conservation Reserve was established before Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy was finalized. Ranger North does not allow for commercial timber harvesting, mining or commercial hydro electric power development. Most recreational and non-commercial activities that have traditionally been enjoyed in this area can continue, provided they pose no threat to the natural ecosystems and features represented in the conservation reserve.

6.0 Planning Organization

These Terms of Reference cover planning for the Algoma Headwaters, Goulais River and Aubinadong-Nushatogaini Rivers Provincial Parks, and the adjacent Ranger North Conservation Reserve, collectively known as the Algoma Headwaters Signature Site. (Table 1 and Figure 1). The Ministry of Natural Resources will administer all four protected areas. Due to the interconnecting nature of the Natural Environment park with two Waterway parks and one Conservation Reserve, and given their significance on local and provincial levels, planning for all four "backcountry" protected areas will be undertaken in an integrated manner.

Planning will deal specifically with lands and waters within the Signature Site. Planning will take into account those activities on adjacent Crown lands outside of the protected areas that may affect ecosystems or impact upon Signature Site management or operations. Planning will thus consider the effects of adjacent land uses as part of the planning process, and *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy* (OMNR, 1999).

Access: The Algoma Headwaters Signature Site can be accessed from many directions by a variety of means. These include the following:

- West and South: Access from Sault Ste. Marie and Searchmont by road is along the Whitman Dam Road and then onto the Domtar Road.
- East and South: Access from the community of Thessalon north on Highway 129 to Ranger Lake Road and north onto the Domtar Road.
- Air Access: Most major lakes in the Signature Site are presently accessed by private and commercial aircraft for fishing and other recreational purposes.
- Water Access: The major water bodies and some of the smaller water bodies in the Signature Site are presently accessed by canoeists with some motorboat use.

6.1 Steering Committee and Planning Team

A Regional Steering Committee, also involved with other regional Signature Sites, will work with the planning team. The planning team will deliver the products associated with the completion of the Signature Site Strategy.

Steering Committee	**Location/Affiliation**
Paul Bewick, Chair	Northeast Zone Manager, Ontario Parks (Sudbury)
Serge Tenalia	District Manager, Sault Ste. Marie
Wayne Fiset	District Manager, Chapleau
Will Kershaw	Northeast Zone Management Planner, Ontario Parks (Sudbury)
Grant Ritchie	Northeast Region Planning Manager (Timmins)
David Scott	District Manager, Hearst
Cindy Blancher-Smith	District Manager, Sudbury
Dianne Corbett	District Manager, Timmins
John Thompson	Natural Heritage Specialist, Ontario Parks (Timmins)
Planning Team	
Chris Caldwell	Project Manager & Park Superintendent, Pancake Bay/Algoma Headwaters, Sault Ste. Marie
Tom Mispel-Beyer	Information Management Supervisor, Sault Ste. Marie
Robert Knudsen	Resource Field Technician, Algoma Headwaters
Nancy Scott	Assistant Park Planner, Sault Ste. Marie
Sheila Walsh	A/District Planner, Sault Ste. Marie
Glenn Carder	GIS Technician
Richard Philips	A/District Planner, Chapleau
Sault District Support Staff	
Ron Reffle	Area Manager
Kip Bradfield	IRM Technical Specialist
Jacques Landry	Senior Fish & Wildlife Specialist
Heather Barns	Forest Analyst
Blind River Support Staff	
Joanne Marck	Resource Technician
Gord Campbell	Area Forester
Chapleau District Support Staff	
Pat Tangi	Resource Liaison Officer
Ontario Parks Support	
Phil Kor	Conservation Geologist (Peterborough)
Bill Crins	Conservation Biologist (Peterborough)
Dan Mulrooney	Research Analyst (Peterborough)
Will Kershaw	Management Planner, Northeast Zone
Steve Pianosi	GIS (Sudbury)
Other Staff as required	
Marnie Clement	Communications Services Branch (Peterborough)
GIS personnel	Geomatics Centre, Timmins

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities

Under the direction of the project manager, planning team members will use their technical and professional expertise to address issues that arise during the planning process and to produce planning documents leading to an approved Signature Site Strategy. The collective responsibilities of team members are as follows:

- Attend planning team meetings
- Ensure that appropriate planning guidelines are followed and that all requirements are met
- Review and update management planning background information
- Encourage integration of park and conservation reserve planning objectives with the Ontario Living Legacy Land Use Strategy and District Land Use Guidelines (Sault Ste. Marie and Chapleau)
- Attend related meetings and information centers as required
- Organize and implement effective public consultation
- Assist in reviewing and responding to public input
- Prepare and review various management planning products/documents; make appropriate modifications as required in light of public input and internal/external reviews

Individual member responsibilities are outlined below:

6.3 Project Manager

- Project lead and chair of planning team meetings
- Main contact for planning team in responding to specific concerns and issues, and for communications with the media
- Provide background on issues and operational matters
- Maintain communications with the aboriginal communities, the planning team, local communities, stakeholders and interested parties
- Encourage First Nations and stakeholders to create and maintain a common long-term vision for the Signature Site
- Ensure adherence to the Environmental Assessment Act, Environmental Bill of Rights and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Acts for all parts of the planning process
- Ensure coordination in the planning process between Ontario Parks Zone and the MNR Regional office
- Coordinate and implement the planning schedule; facilitate and arrange meetings as required
- In consultation with the planning team, determine planning priorities
- Maintain public relations on matters pertaining to planning process – provide liaison with interested individuals, groups and organizations
- Provide technical direction on planning and park operations

- Provide coordination with provincial planning initiatives
- Provide the lead on natural and cultural heritage interests
- Complete work planning, coordinate communications and prepare funding proposals for Ontario Parks Zone Manager
- Maintain regular communications among other signature site project managers to coordinate resolution of common issues and report to the Steering Committee

6.4 Planning Team Members

- Provide support documents following all planning stages to summarize public comment
- Arrange for technical or professional guidance as required
- Coordinate all consultation/communication requirements, including media, translation; requirements under French Language Services Act, preparation of ads, open house displays, visual aids and comment forms
- Compile mailing lists for all interested public groups, organizations and individuals
- Coordinate map production with MNR GIS staff
- Contacts for management activities on adjacent Crown lands in Sault Ste. Marie District
- Seek district input and provide advice on district initiatives, opportunities and issues
- Interpret management intent of adjacent land use designations in the Ontario Living Legacy (OMNR, 1999)

6.5 MNR Integration and Support

This Strategy cannot be prepared in isolation, if it is to be relevant and effective. Surrounding landscapes may contain Signature Site-related values, similarly, Signature Site planning, management and operations can have impacts on surrounding private and public lands. Management planning will integrate with other MNR programs. In addition to the core Planning Team, other MNR staff will be kept informed and consulted to ensure a strong link between Signature Site planning, management and operations on adjacent Crown lands within the Sault Ste. Marie and Chapleau Districts.

7.0 Public Consultation

Effective public consultation is key to a successful planning process. First Nations and other communities, organizations and individuals may provide input throughout all stages of the process. The planning team will solicit public input through a variety of means, including:

- one-on-one meetings and discussions with interested parties, stakeholders and First Nations and with representatives of communities adjacent to the planning area as required;
- Making pertinent documents available for review through various means including "reading rooms" at the Ministry of Natural Resources offices, such as in Chapleau, Sault Ste. Marie, Peterborough and Toronto.
- soliciting involvement, information and comment from the public through notices and mailings and;
- conducting informal presentations, meetings and discussions with groups, agencies and individuals as required.

7.1 One-on-One Information Meetings

Meetings are proposed to present and exchange information with communities adjacent to the planning area. These may include, but are not limited to, the First Nations and the communities of Searchmont, Sault Ste. Marie, Chapleau, Wawa and Blind River.

A key component of these meetings will be to find opportunities for partnership and cooperation between MNR and local communities and stakeholders in the protection, management and operation of the Signature Site. The First Nations community, for example, will be invited to identify traditional heritage uses and sites and to work in cooperation with MNR in protecting Aboriginal heritage.

Similarly, other communities, interest groups and users will be invited to assist in identifying and protecting Signature Site values and resources.

Table 2: Possible contacts for Advisory Meetings/Workshops

Area of Interest	Representatives
First Nations	Garden River First Nation Serpent River First Nation Batchawana First Nation Missisauga First Nation Michipicoten First Nation Brunswick House First Nation Thessalon First Nation Missinaibie-Cree First Nation Chapleau Cree First Nation Chapleau Ojibway First Nation North Shore Tribal Council
Local Government/Economic Development	Searchmont Community City of Sault Ste. Marie Local Chambers of Commerce Local Economic Development Consultants/Committees
Adjacent Industrial Uses	Clergue Forest Management Inc. (Sault Ste. Marie) North Shore Forest Management Inc. (Blind River) Superior Forest Management Inc. (Chapleau) Other forest industry / mining industry representatives
Tourism	Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters (NOTO) Local lodges and outfitters
Canoeing	Ontario Recreational Canoe Association (ORCA)
General Parks Use/Interest	Wildlands League Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) Sault Naturalists
Hunting/Fishing	Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH)
Snowmobile/ATV	Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs (OFATV)
Environmental	Friends of Algoma Headwaters
Aircraft Access	Canadian Owners and Pilots Association Ontario Wilderness Vacations (commercial fly-in operator) Air-Dale Flying Service Algoma Headwaters Wilderness Tours (commercial fly-in operator) Adventure North
Citizens-at-large	Various selected representatives to provide unbiased overview to area needs/concerns
Land Use Permits and Patent Lands or near Parks	Individual LUP/patent land owners

7.2 General Public Involvement

Public consultation will build upon previous work by the Draft Megisan Lake Environmental Assessment (OMNR 1995). General public consultation will use appropriate sections from the previously established EA mailing list, the Ontario Parks List of Mandatory and Discretionary Contacts (PM 11.02.02), and other information that becomes available. There will be a total of five mailings throughout the planning process (Table 3). Summaries of the issues and

Table 2: Possible contacts for Advisory Meetings/Workshops

Area of Interest	Representatives
First Nations	Garden River First Nation Serpent River First Nation Batchawana First Nation Missisauga First Nation Michipicoten First Nation Brunswick House First Nation Thessalon First Nation Missinaibie-Cree First Nation Chapleau Cree First Nation Chapleau Ojibway First Nation North Shore Tribal Council
Local Government Economic Development	Searchmont Community City of Sault Ste. Marie Local Chambers of Commerce Local Economic Development Consultants Committees
Adjacent Industrial Uses	Clergue Forest Management Inc. (Sault Ste. Marie) North Shore Forest Management Inc. (Blind River) Superior Forest Management Inc. (Chapleau) Other forest industry / mining industry representatives
Tourism	Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters (NOTO) Local lodges and outfitters
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strategy alternatives and preliminary management strategy will be available in French. The final management strategy will be available in English and French.

Information pertaining to the planning process will also be made available for public access through the Environmental Bill of Rights electronic registry.

Beyond the formal avenues and opportunities built into the planning process, planning team members will be available for informal discussions, meetings and presentations on Signature Site-related issues involving interested individuals and groups.

Comments from the public should be sent to:

Mr. Chris Caldwell
Park Superintendent / Project Manager
Ontario Parks / Algoma Headwaters Signature Site
64 Church Street
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3H3

Comments may also be sent via e-mail to the following address:
chris.caldwell@mnr.gov.on.ca

8.0 Significant Issues and Opportunities

The Signature Site Strategy will address a number of significant issues, including a number of issues that are unique to Waterway and Natural Environment class parks and Conservation Reserves. Some issues arise from past uses prior to establishment of protected areas that do not conform with policy as outlined in Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies (OMNR, 1992), Conservation Reserves Policy (OMNR 1997) and Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (OMNR, 1999).

Presently, the Signature Site has a non-operational status. Phase-in of these parks and the conservation reserve to an operational status will enable MNR to fulfill its objectives of protection, heritage appreciation, recreation and tourism. This will also offer opportunities that may contribute to local economies.

8.1 Access

- The existing Ranger North access road and other identified existing authorized roads necessary for industrial use, along with necessary wayside aggregate sites, will be maintained for use by the forest industry and recreational users.
- There is a need to integrate the variety of access.
- Existing road access through the Signature Site
- Mechanized off-road and road travel – ATV and snowmobile access

- Private and commercial aircraft access

8.2 Adjacent Land Uses and Activities

- Management of Signature Site-related values on adjacent lands and waters
- Supportive landscape management within the context of the greater surrounding ecosystems
- Implementation of an Algoma Headwaters Signature Site Recreation Strategy and its' integration with management planning.

8.3 Area Social and Economic Opportunities, Benefits and Impacts

- Opportunities for partnerships and business agreements with area communities, businesses and the First Nations communities in the operation and management of the Signature Site
- Opportunities for enhanced Signature Site-related tourism
- Restrictions on existing land use permits (private and commercial) and non-conforming uses through Signature Site operations and management

8.4 Protection

- Identification, assessment and management of Signature Site heritage resources
- Research and monitoring priorities
- Increasing angling pressures on the Signature Site's fisheries
- Appropriate zoning designations within Natural Environment and Waterway class parks and complementary zoning of the conservation reserve as required
- Cooperation with the First Nations communities and other area communities to ensure the protection of natural and cultural heritage
- Fire management strategies in the Signature Site
- Species at Risk identification, monitoring and appropriate management measures

8.5 Rehabilitation and Restoration of Ecosystems affected by Past Land Uses

- Ecological restoration of Signature Site fisheries and aquatic habitats
- Rehabilitation of unneeded resource extraction roads
- Restoration and management of altered forest stands, plantations
- Further research

8.6 Visitor Management and Customer Service

- Education, information and enforcement
- Needs assessment: individual campers, commercial outfitters, youth camps
- Visitor distribution
- Visitor entry/registration and fee collection
- Standards for backcountry operations
- Establishment and enforcement of best practices for low-impact backcountry travel
- Visitor safety
- Integration with recreational use/travel patterns on adjacent Crown lands.

9.0 Planning Schedule

The following table outlines the stages required to complete the Signature Site planning process:

Table 3: Signature Site Planning Process & Schedule

Item	Requirements / Notes	Dates	Public Consultation
Interim Management Statement	On-going distribution throughout the planning process	August 2001	
Terms of Reference	Approval by Managing Director, Ontario Parks Core team orientation	Spring – Summer 2002	
Invitation to Participate	45 day public notice period inviting participation in planning process and to inspect approved Terms of Reference	Summer 2002	EBR Notice of Proposal Newspaper ads, Website, other media Mailings Information Centres review period (45 days)
Draft Background Information and Issues & Plan Alternatives	Assemble and assess files from Sault Ste. Marie and Chapleau District Offices, Parks Zone office, update as required Core team orientation	Summer / Fall 2002 (additions/revisions based on public input)	
Public Review of Background Information and Issues & Plan Alternatives Documents	Public notice (15 days prior to holding any information centres) that the Background Information as well as the Issues and Plan Alternatives documents are available for review. Review period (45 days)	Fall / Winter 2002	EBR Notice of Proposal, Newspaper ads, Website, other media Mailings Information Centres review period (45 days)
Draft of Preliminary Management Strategy	Preparation of Document GIS product development Draft of revised Issues & Plan Alternativess Document based on public review	Winter / Spring 2003	Internal review by MNR district and Ontario Parks main office staff
Public Review of Preliminary Mgt. Strategy	Public notice (15 days prior to holding information centre that the Preliminary Mgt.Strategy document Is available for review Review period (45 days)	Spring / Summer 2003	EBR Notice of Proposal Newspaper ads, Website, other media Mailings Information Centres review period (45 days)
Recommended Management Strategy	Summary of public comments	Summer 2003	
Approved Management Strategy	Internal reviews and approval Plan production, printing Public opportunity to inspect (45 days)	Fall 2003	EBR Notice of Decision media ad distribution mailings of approved document

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10.0 Estimated Budget Requirements

Table 4: Signature Site Planning – Projected Budget 2001 to 2003

Planning Stage/Item	Requirements	Cost $000	Details
Terms of Reference	core planning team orientation		
Field Inventories	staff as well as consultants	60.0	
Invitation to Participate	public notice and mailing list newspaper ads	10.0	
Background Information	one-on-one meetings/workshops GIS analysis/development	20.0	Travel/meeting expenses printing costs
Public Review of Background Information	newspaper ads, other media mailings information centers	10.0	
Issues and Plan Alternatives	advisory workshop newspaper ads, other media mailings meetings as required	8.0	Meeting expenses printing costs
Draft of Preliminary Management Strategy	GIS product development computer graphics	5.0	
Preliminary Management Strategy	advisory workshop GIS/graphics newspaper ads, other media mailings meetings as required	10.0	Meeting expenses, printing costs
Review Public Comment on Preliminary Strategy	possible advisory workshop to present and analyze findings	5.0	Meeting expenses
Recommended Management Strategy	finalize graphic products	4.0	
Approved Management Strategy	media ads printing/production distribution of final document	5.0	*partial cost recovery through sale of final document
Ongoing/Additional Costs	office supplies/postage field research/surveys staff travel expenses photographic/graphic/computer supplies equipment/vehicles facilitator planning team expenses French translation requirements	36.0	
Total Estimated Costs **		$173.0	

- ** Total estimated cost includes $104 0 allocation for fiscal year 2001/2002 and $69 0 in fiscal year 2002/2003 to complete the Signature Site Strategy. Estimates do not include salaries

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References

The following documents are available for review in the Signature Site Reading Room at the Sault Ste. Marie District office at 64 Church Street, Sault Ste. Marie:

Provincial Park Management Planning:

OMNR, 2001 Algoma Headwaters Sig. Site - Interim Management Statement
OMNR, 1994. Ontario Provincial Parks Management Planning Manual
OMNR, 1992. Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies
OMNR, 1989. Ontario Provincial Parks Policy Implementation Details (PM 1.00)

Related Planning MNR:

OMNR, 1999. Ontario's Living Legacy – Land Use Strategy
OMNR, 1997. Nature's Best – Ontario's Parks & Protected Areas: Framework & Action Plan
OMNR, 1997. Ontario's Approach to Wilderness: A Policy
OMNR, 1997. Lands for Life – A Land Use Planning System for Ontario's Natural Resources
OMNR, 1997. Ontario Parks Business Plan
OMNR, 1990. Reconnaissance Inventory to Locate Old White and/or Red Pine Stands in Site Region 4E of the OMNR" (1990).

Background Information: Sault Ste. Marie Area Systems Planning:

Ranger North Statement of Conservation Interest (1999)
"Draft" Megisan Lake Environmental Assessment (1995)
Sault Ste. Marie District Land Use Guidelines (1983)
Chapleau District Land Use Guidelines (1981)
Quantification of the Economic Value of Forestry, Tourism, Recreation and Other Industries and Activities Within the Megisan Lake Area (1993)
'Ethnohistory & Aboriginal Peoples Land Use Report' by Settlement Surveys Ltd. (1993)
Algoma Forest 2000-2020 Forest management Plan Test and Supplementary Documentation (2000)
Sault District Values maps (NRVIS) (1999)
Ontario Geological Survey, Northern Ontario Engineering Geology Terrain Study 86, Wenebegon Lake Area (1980)
Sault Ste. Marie District lake Survey/Inventory Assessment (1964-1969)
Sault Ste. Marie Ontario Land Inventory Program (1975)
Life Science Resource Features of Selected Areas Containing Old White and Red Pine (Site Region 4E-Ontario 1991)
Life Science Gap Analysis for Site District 4E-3 (1996)
Sault Ste. Marie District Shoreline Management Plan (1991)
Sault Ste. Marie District Sensitive Areas Files